

# Erasmus accreditation in the fields of vocational education and training, school education and adult education

Erasmus accreditation is a tool for organisations in vocational education and training (VET), school education and adult education that want to open up to cross-border exchange and cooperation. Award of the Erasmus accreditation confirms that the applicant has set up a plan to implement high quality mobility activities as part of a wider effort to develop their organisation. This plan is called an Erasmus Plan and it is a key part of the application for Erasmus accreditation.

Applicants can apply for an individual Erasmus accreditation for their organisation, or for an Erasmus accreditation for mobility consortium coordinators, as explained below. Previous experience in the Programme is not required to apply.

Organisations that already have an Erasmus accreditation may be awarded an excellence label to recognise their past work and dedication to quality.

## How to access mobility opportunities with an Erasmus accreditation?

Successful applicants for Erasmus accreditation will gain simplified access to Key Action 1 funding opportunities in their respective field. The yearly call for funding for accredited projects is presented in the chapter dedicated to each of the fields covered by the Erasmus accreditations.

## Objectives of the Action

### In all three fields:

#### Strengthening the European dimension of teaching and learning by:

- promoting values of inclusion and diversity, tolerance, and democratic participation
- promoting knowledge about shared European heritage and diversity
- supporting development of professional networks across Europe

### In the field of vocational education and training

#### Contributing to the implementation of the Council Recommendation on vocational education and training and the Osnabrück Declaration and to the European Skills Agenda, and to the creation of the European Education Area by:

- increasing the quality of initial and continuing vocational education and training (IVET and CVET)
- strengthening key competences and transversal skills, in particular language learning and digital skills

- supporting the development of job specific skills needed in the current and future labour market
- sharing best practices and promoting the use of new and innovative pedagogical methods and technologies, and supporting the professional development of teachers, trainers, mentors and other staff in VET
- building the capacity of VET providers to carry out high quality mobility projects, and their ability to form quality partnerships while developing their internationalisation strategy
- making mobility a realistic possibility for any learner in IVET and CVET, and increasing the average duration of mobility for VET learners to increase its quality and impact
- fostering the quality, transparency and recognition of learning outcomes of mobility periods abroad, especially by using European tools and instruments for this purpose

## **In the field of school education**

### **Increasing the quality of teaching and learning in school education by:**

- supporting professional development of teachers, school leaders and other school staff
- promoting the use of new technologies and innovative teaching methods
- improving language learning and language diversity in schools
- supporting the sharing and transfer of best practices in teaching and school development

### **Contributing to the creation of the European Education Area by:**

- building capacity of schools to engage in cross-border exchanges and cooperation, and carry out high quality mobility projects
- making learning mobility a realistic possibility for any pupil in school education
- fostering recognition of learning outcomes of pupils and staff in mobility periods abroad

## **In the field of adult education**

### **Contributing to the creation of the European Education Area and to the European Skills Agenda by:**

- increasing the quality of formal, informal and non-formal adult education
- improving the quality of the adult education offer through professionalisation of its staff and building capacity of adult education providers to implement high quality learning programmes
- increasing the quality of teaching and learning in all forms of adult education, and making it relevant to the needs of the society at large
- improving the provision of adult education for key competences as defined by the EU framework (2018), including basic skills (literacy, numeracy, digital skills) and other life skills
- building the capacity of adult education providers and other organisations with a role in the adult education field to carry out high quality mobility projects
- raising the participation of adults of all ages and socio-economic background in adult education, especially by fostering participation of organisations working with disadvantaged learners, small adult education providers, newcomers to the Programme and less experienced organisations, as well as community-based grassroots organisations

## **Eligibility criteria**

### **Who can apply?**

### **In the field of vocational education and training:**

1. Organisations providing initial or continuing vocational education and training
2. Local and regional public authorities, coordination bodies and other organisations with a role in the field of vocational education and training
3. Companies and other public or private organisations hosting, training or otherwise working with learners and apprentices in vocational education and training

### **In the field of school education:**

1. Schools providing general education at pre-primary, primary or secondary level<sup>1</sup>
2. Local and regional public authorities, coordination bodies and other organisations with a role in the field of school education

### **In the field of adult education:**

1. Organisations providing formal, informal and non-formal adult education<sup>2</sup>
2. Local and regional public authorities, coordination bodies and other organisations with a role in the field of adult education

Applicable definitions and principles in all three fields

Eligibility of organisations under condition (1) will be determined based on educational programmes and activities they are providing. An organisation can be eligible in more than one field if it is providing various educational programmes and activities.

The competent National Authority in each country will define:

- the educational programmes and activities that enable organisations to be eligible under condition (1), and
- organisations eligible under condition (2).

The applicable definitions and examples of eligible organisations will be published in the website of the responsible National Agency.

### **Eligible countries**

Applicant organisations must be established in an EU Member State or in a third country associated to the Programme.

### **Where to submit an application?**

Applications must be submitted to the National Agency of the country where the applicant organisation is established.

### **Submission deadline**

**19 October at 12:00:00 (midday Brussels time)**

### **Erasmus quality standards**

Applicants for Erasmus accreditation must subscribe to Erasmus quality standards as presented on the Europa website:

[https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/erasmus-quality-standards-mobility-projects-vet-adults-schools\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/erasmus-quality-standards-mobility-projects-vet-adults-schools_en)

Erasmus quality standards may be updated during the validity period of the accreditation. In that case, agreement of accredited organisations will be asked before they can apply for their next grant.

## **Number of applications**

An organisation can apply once in each of the three fields covered by this call: adult education, vocational education and training, and school education. Organisations applying for more than one field need to submit separate applications for each field.

Organisations that already have an Erasmus accreditation cannot apply for a new accreditation in the same field.

## **Types of applications**

Applicants can apply as an individual organisation or as a coordinator of a mobility consortium. It is not possible to apply for both types of accreditation in the same field.

## **Erasmus accreditation for mobility consortium coordinators**

A mobility consortium is a group of organisations from the same country implementing mobility activities as part of a joint Erasmus Plan. Each mobility consortium is coordinated by one lead organisation: a mobility consortium coordinator that must be accredited with an Erasmus accreditation.

The mobility consortium coordinator may organise activities themselves (same as any organisation with an individual accreditation), and in addition they can provide mobility opportunities to other member organisations in their consortium. An Erasmus accreditation is not required for consortium members.

Applicants for mobility consortium coordinators will be required to describe the purpose and planned composition of their consortium in the application. All planned consortium member organisations must be from the same EU member state or a third country associated to the Programme as the mobility consortium coordinator. However, an exact list of consortium members is not required at this stage. For more details, please consult eligibility criteria for accredited mobility projects in the relevant field.

For further details, please see the rules for accredited mobility projects.

## **Supporting organisations**

Any organisation active in education and training may participate as a supporting organisation to an accredited beneficiary. The role and obligations of supporting organisations must be formally defined between them and the accredited organisation (including in cases when the supporting organisation is simultaneously a member of the mobility consortium led by the beneficiary that is being supported). All contributions of supporting organisations must comply with the Erasmus quality standards.

## **Selection criteria**

Applicants must have sufficient operational and professional capacity to implement the proposed Erasmus Plan, including at least two years of relevant experience in the field of the application and, in case of mobility consortium coordinator, appropriate capacity to coordinate the consortium.

Please read **Part C of this Guide** to find out more information about the general operational capacity criteria and these specific requirements for accreditation applicants

## **Exclusion criteria**

Applicants must submit a signed declaration on their honour, certifying that they are not in any of the situations referred to in the exclusion criteria listed in **Part C of this Guide**, that the submitted Erasmus Plan contains original content authored by the applicant organisation, and that no other organisations or external individuals have been paid for drafting the application.

At the same time, the applicants are allowed and encouraged to seek policy advice from relevant education authorities and experts, or to exchange good practices with organisations similar to theirs that have more experience in Erasmus+. Applicants for a mobility consortium coordinator may consult potential consortium members when drafting their application. Applicants can support their application with strategic documents relevant for their Erasmus Plan, such as an internationalisation strategy or a strategy developed by their supervising or coordinating bodies.

## **Award criteria**

Applications will be evaluated separately for school education, vocational education and training, and adult education. Quality of the applications will be assessed by assigning points out of a total of 100, based on the below criteria and weightings.

To be considered for award, applications must pass the following thresholds:

- At least 70 out of the total 100 points, and
- At least half of the maximum score points in each of the four award criteria categories

### **Relevance - Maximum score 10 points**

The extent to which:

- the applicant's profile, experience, activities and target population of learners are relevant for the field of the application, the objectives of this Call, and the type of application (individual organisation or a consortium coordinator)
- in addition, for consortium coordinators:
  - the profile of the planned consortium members is relevant for the purpose and objectives of the consortium as defined in the application, for the field of the application and the objectives of this Call
  - the creation of the consortium brings a clear added value for its members in terms of the objectives of this Call

### **Erasmus Plan: Objectives - Maximum score 40 points**

The extent to which:

- the proposed Erasmus Plan is in line with the objectives of this Call

- the proposed Erasmus Plan objectives address the needs of the applicant organisation, its staff and learners in a clear and concrete way
  - for consortium coordinators, this criterion applies to the entire planned consortium and requires the Erasmus Plan objectives to be coherent with the purpose of the consortium as defined in the application
- the proposed Erasmus Plan objectives and their timing are realistic and sufficiently ambitious to achieve a positive impact for the organisation (or the consortium)
- the proposed measures for tracking and evaluating the progress of the Erasmus Plan objectives are appropriate and concrete
- if the applicant has attached strategic documents to their application: there is a clear explanation of the link between the proposed Erasmus Plan and included documents

### **Erasmus Plan: Activities - Maximum score 20 points**

The extent to which:

- the proposed number of participants in mobility activities is proportional to the applicant organisation's size and experience
  - for consortium coordinators, the planned size of the consortium will be taken into account
- the proposed number of participants in mobility activities is realistic and appropriate for the objectives set in the Erasmus Plan
- the profiles of planned participants are relevant to the field of the application, the proposed Erasmus Plan, and the objectives of this Call
- where relevant and if the applicant is planning to organise mobility activities for learners: involvement of participants with fewer opportunities

### **Erasmus Plan: Management - Maximum score 30 points**

The extent to which:

- the applicant has proposed concrete ways of contributing to the basic principles of the Erasmus accreditation described in the Erasmus quality standards
- the applicant has proposed a clear and complete allocation of tasks in line with the Erasmus quality standards
- the applicant has allocated appropriate resources to manage the Programme activities in accordance with the Erasmus quality standards
- there is appropriate involvement at the level of organisation's management
- appropriate measures have been defined to ensure continuity of programme activities in case of changes in the staff or management of the applicant organisation
- the applicant has proposed concrete and logical steps to integrate the results of their mobility activities in the organisation's regular work
  - for consortium coordinators, this criterion applies to the entire planned consortium

### **Maximum number of awarded Erasmus accreditations**

In countries where interest for Erasmus accreditations is very high, the National Agency may set a maximum number of accreditations to be awarded. This decision will be made separately for each of the three fields and published in the National Agency's website together with this Call.

- If the National Agency does not set a maximum number of approved accreditations for a given field, all applications satisfying the minimum criteria set in this Call will be approved.

- If the National Agency sets a maximum number of approved accreditations for a given field, a ranking list of applications satisfying the minimum criteria will be established. Accreditations will be awarded starting from the highest scoring application until the maximum number of awarded accreditations has been reached. In case more than one application has the same number of points as the last one to be awarded, the maximum number of awarded accreditations will be increased to include all applications with that number of points.

## **Validity**

Erasmus accreditation is awarded for the entire programming period until 2027. To ensure realistic planning, the submitted Erasmus Plan will cover a shorter period of two to five years, and will be updated periodically.

In case Erasmus accreditation is required for participation in any action after the end of the 2021-2027 programming period, the National Agency may prolong the accreditation's validity under conditions defined by the European Commission.

The accreditation can be terminated at any time in case the organisation ceases to exist or by agreement of the National Agency and the accredited organisation. The National Agency or the accredited organisation may unilaterally terminate the accreditation if no applications for funding have been made under that accreditation during at least three years.

## **Reporting, monitoring and quality assurance**

### **Closing reports at the end of each grant agreement**

At the end of each grant agreement approved under the Erasmus accreditation, the accredited organisation will submit a closing report about the delivered activities and targets.

### **Accreditation progress reports**

Based on the content of approved Erasmus Plan, and at least once during a period of five years, accredited organisations will be required to:

- report on how they have ensured the respect of Erasmus quality standards
- report on how their Erasmus Plan objectives are progressing
- update their Erasmus Plan

The National Agency may decide to request a progress report on the different elements listed above at the same time, or separately.

The National Agency may decide to replace any accreditation progress report with a structured monitoring visit.

Based on the accredited organisation's performance resulting from reporting, monitoring and quality assurance checks, or as result of significant changes in the organisation, the National Agency may change the number and schedule of progress reports.

In addition, accredited organisations may voluntarily request to make an update of their Erasmus Plan. Based on the organisation's reasoning, the National Agency will decide whether an update is justified. An Erasmus Plan update may include a request for change from individual organisation accreditation to accreditation for mobility consortium coordinator, or the other way around.

## **Monitoring and checks**

The National Agency may organise formal checks, monitoring visits or other activities to track the progress and performance of accredited organisations, ensure the respect of the agreed quality standards, and provide support.

Formal checks may take the form of desk checks or visits to the accredited organisation, consortium members, supporting organisations, and any other premises where relevant activities take place. The National Agency may request assistance of National Agencies in other countries to check and monitor activities taking place there.

Following a report or monitoring activity, the National Agency will provide feedback to the accredited organisation. The National Agency may also provide the accredited organisation with obligatory or advisory instructions on how to improve its performance.

In case of newly accredited applicants, high risk organisations, or in case of failure to comply with National Agency's instructions and deadlines, very low performance resulting from reporting, monitoring and quality assurance checks, or violations of the rules of the Programme (including in another action), the National Agency may take the following remedial measures:

- **Observation:** the National Agency may limit the level of funding that the accredited organisation can apply for in actions where Erasmus accreditation is a requirement.

Newly accredited organisations may be put under observation if risk of low quality implementation is identified during the operational capacity check, or if the application assessors point out serious weaknesses in the applicant's Erasmus Plan.

- **Suspension:** suspended organisations may not apply for funding in actions where Erasmus accreditation is a requirement. The National Agency may also terminate some or all ongoing grant agreements awarded under the suspended accreditation.

The observation or suspension period will continue until the National Agency determines that the conditions and quality requirements set in this Call are once again fulfilled, and that the risk of low performance has been addressed by the accredited organisation.

Organisations under suspension or observation may not apply for a new accreditation in the same field.

In case of continued failure to comply with National Agency's instructions and deadlines, very low performance, or in case of repeated or significant violations of the rules of the Programme (including in another action), the National Agency may terminate the accreditation.

## **Recognition of excellence**

Best performing accredited organisations will be recognised through award of excellence labels.

As part of this Call, an excellence label will be awarded to VET Mobility Charter holders that have successfully applied for the light selection procedure, and which have achieved an average score of at least 85 points in the evaluation of their last two final reports for Erasmus+ projects implemented under the VET Mobility Charter. The awarded excellence labels will be valid for three years.

Conditions for the award of excellence labels to newly accredited organisations in all three fields will be defined in future Erasmus+ calls for proposals.

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**1** Including organisations providing early childhood education and care. Schools with a special status and under supervision of national authorities in another country (e.g. Lycée français or German schools) may need to apply to the NA of the supervising country. For precise information in each case, please contact the National Agency in the host country or in the country of the relevant national authority

**2** Without prejudice to definitions established by the competent National Authority, please note that organisations providing vocational education and training to adult learners are typically considered to be vocational education and training providers, and not adult education providers. For further information, please consult the applicable definitions in the website of your National Agency.

## **Tagged in:**

### **Vocational education and training**

### **Adult education**

### **School education**